PATENT CLAIMS:

1. A switch-on/switch-off concept for the image display (1) of an automotive night vision system,

   the night vision system having an active infrared illumination (2),

   a camera (3) for recording infrared images, an image display (1) for reproducing image information,

   an evaluation means (4) for analyzing operating parameters (5) and/or ambient parameters (6), in order to activate the active infrared illumination (2) on the basis of this analysis,

   as well as a control means (7) that is independent of this evaluation means (4) for activating or deactivating the night vision system,

   wherein the image display (1) is activated or deactivated directly by the control means (7), in this connection, the analysis of operating parameters (5) and/or of ambient parameters (6) by the evaluation means (4) not being considered.

2. The switch-on/switch-off concept as recited in claim 1,

   wherein the control means (7) is constituted of a switch which is used for activating or deactivating the image display (1).

3. The switch-on/switch-off concept as recited in one of the preceding claims,

   wherein the control means (7) is influenced on the basis of internal or external diagnostic systems.

4. The switch-on/switch-off concept as recited in one of the preceding claims,

   wherein the image display (1) is able to reproduce image information from at least one additional camera which is linked to the night vision system and is sensitive in the visible wavelength range, in particular.

5. The switch-on/switch-off concept as recited in claim 4,

   wherein, for as long as the infrared illumination (2) is inactive, image information recorded by the camera operating in the visible wavelength range is shown using the image display (1).

6. The switch-on/switch-off concept as recited in claims 4 and 5,
    wherein a means for examining the quality of the infrared image is provided and,
    when satisfactory quality is ascertained, the infrared image is displayed.

7. The switch-on/switch-off concept as recited in one of the preceding claims,
    wherein the image display (1) is deactivated in the case that a malfunction prevents
    the image information from being continually refreshed.